

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

1829

(No. 26 February 2013)

This section covers respiratory protection and respirator use. For information about fit testing procedures for approved respirators, see the CAL FIRE Safety Handbook 1700, [Section 1729](#).

In accordance with the [California Code of Regulations \(CCR\), Title 8, Section 5144](#), CAL FIRE employees will be provided with and be required to wear the appropriate respiratory protection equipment when working in atmospheres that:

- Are immediately dangerous to life and health.
- Are suspected to be hazardous.
- Are not immediately dangerous to life and health; however, may produce immediate physical discomfort or chronic poisoning.

RESPIRATOR USAGE

1829.1

Hazardous atmospheres that require the use of a respirator include circumstances where employees are working in or likely to be exposed to:

- Any oxygen deficient atmosphere. (See CAL FIRE Handbook Section 1729.2.)
- Gas, vapor, particulate containments or chemicals of such concentration or duration to cause injury.

Non-emergency and/or project work situations requiring the use of a respirator include, but are not limited to:

- Pesticide application.
- Herbicide application.
- Spray painting.
- Any chemical handling when recommended by the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS).

Situations requiring the use of a pressure-demand, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) include but are not limited to:

- Entering an oxygen deficient atmosphere; or
- Entering a burning building; or
- Entering a confined space; or
- Responding to a vehicle fire; or

- Working in hazardous smoke other than a wildfire (e.g. disposal/refuse dump area fire); or
- Operating bulldozers in smoke containing hazardous materials (e.g. disposal/refuse dump area).

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION STANDARDS

1829.2

Respiratory protection equipment and the use of respirators must meet the applicable minimum requirements of [CCR, Title 8, Section 5144](#). Non-compliance with Cal/OSHA regulations can result in penalties of up to \$250,000 or up to three years imprisonment or both.

CAL FIRE must also meet additional requirements for fire suppression personnel in [CCR, Title 8, Section 3409](#).

- Utilize respiratory protective devices that are approved and certified.
- Provide procedures for the use, care, maintenance, and training relating to respiratory protective equipment.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PLAN

1829.3

[CCR, Title 8, Section 5144](#) requires CAL FIRE to develop and implement a written respiratory protection plan.

CAL FIRE's written respiratory protection plan with worksite-specific procedures is required by Cal/OSHA whenever respirators are required, or in any workplace where respirators are necessary to protect the health of the employee. Unit managers are responsible for the plans' implementation within their Unit. The plan should include respirator use during non-emergency and project work, as well as respiratory protection (SCBAs) for emergency personnel. CAL FIRE's Injury and Illness Prevention Plan (IIPP) has a respiratory protection plan that meets this requirement in CCR, Title 8, Section 3203. A current plan is to be readily available to all employees at every CAL FIRE workplace. Information regarding the IIPP may be found in the CAL FIRE Safety Handbook, Section 1700.

This plan includes procedures on:

- Criteria for selecting respirators;
- Medical evaluations;
- Fit testing;
- Proper use of respirators;
- Schedules for cleaning, maintenance, storage, repairing and discarding

- Air quality/quantity and flow
- Training on respiratory hazards
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the program

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PLAN FOR NON-EMERGENCY AND PROJECT WORK HAZARDS

1829.3.1

Pursuant to CAL FIRE's IIPP, a written Respiratory Protection Plan for non-emergency and project work respirator use must be prepared by the Unit and include:

- The assignment of a knowledgeable and suitably trained person to administer the respiratory protection plan.
- A procedure that ensures the proper respiratory equipment is provided for the airborne hazards encountered by employees.
- A procedure requiring that employees using respirators to be trained in the use of the equipment. The training must include why the respiratory protection is necessary, the equipment's limitations, sanitary care, respirator fit, use and operation, as well as procedures for emergency situations involving respirator use.
- A monitoring procedure that ensures respirators are used and maintained properly by employees.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PLAN FOR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL

1829.3.2

Pursuant to CAL FIRE's IIPP, a written Respiratory Protection Plan for SCBA use by emergency personnel must be prepared by the Unit and include:

- A procedure for employee training which includes instruction in the proper use and limitations of SCBAs.
- A procedure for cleaning and sanitizing SCBAs after each use, except when impracticable under tactical conditions.
- A procedure for proper storage.
- A list of SCBA user responsibilities that requires users to inspect, use and maintain the SCBA according to training and instructions received; users shall guard against SCBA damage and report any malfunction to their supervisor.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR 1829.4

One person from each Unit, the Fire Academy, and Sacramento Headquarters' will be designated as a Respiratory Protection Program Administrator (RPPA). Area Offices will be coordinated with the local Unit RPPA. The RPPA must be qualified by experience or appropriate training that is commensurate with the complexity of the program.

RESPIRATOR SELECTION 1829.5

Respirators are selected on the basis of hazards to which the employee is exposed. The CAL FIRE Safety Officer will create ad hoc committees as necessary for respirator selection. Only respirators certified by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) will be selected and used.

MEDICAL EVALUATION/EXAMINATION REQUIREMENTS 1829.6

As referenced in Section 1829.3, [CCR, Title 8, Section 5144](#) requires CAL FIRE to develop and implement a written respiratory protection plan. This written plan must include medical evaluations of employees required to use respirators. Failure to comply with this or any part of [CCR, Title 8, Section 5144](#) may result in penalties of up to \$250,000 or up to three years imprisonment or both.

The use of a respirator is required to perform the essential functions of those classifications subject to the Respiratory Protection Program (RPP). Therefore, medical clearance to be fit tested for respiratory protection equipment is a job requirement. Employees and candidates for employment are responsible for completing the Employee Medical Questionnaires (CAL FIRE-600a and STD. 610) upon receipt of the forms, contacting the appropriate Region or Headquarters' RPP staff for medical examination scheduling, and for attending all scheduled medical appointments. Employees are also responsible for providing any additional medical documentation that may be requested by the CAL FIRE Medical Consultant.

It is the employee's and supervisor's responsibility to ensure that employees submit their Employee Medical Questionnaires (CAL FIRE-600a and STD. 610) or Candidate Certification of Medical Condition and attend any required medical examinations necessary for their medical clearance. Supervisors may contact their Unit's RPP Coordinator to check an employee or candidate's clearance status.

Firefighter returnee candidates who have been separated from CAL FIRE can reestablish employment without completing the Employee Medical Questionnaires if the candidate has been medically cleared within the previous 12 months. The candidate must complete and submit a "Candidate Certification of Medical Condition" form to their supervisor prior to being hired, provided there has been no change to the returnee candidate's medical condition since submitting their last CAL FIRE Employee Medical

Questionnaires (CAL FIRE-600a and STD. 610). These forms can be found on the CAL FIRE Intranet Forms page.

Employees who do not submit their Employee Medical Questionnaires, or attend any required medical examinations necessary for their medical clearance are in violation of Departmental policy and Cal/OSHA regulations, and will be immediately released from duty and subject to progressive discipline, up to and including dismissal. Seasonal firefighters who do not complete the required paperwork or examinations for medical clearance may be immediately terminated with cause.

RESPIRATORY PROTECTION PROGRAM EXPENSES

1829.7

Costs for medical evaluations incurred by Departmental personnel, in accordance with [CCR, Title 8, Section 5144](#), will be directly billed to the CAL FIRE Human Resources, Respiratory Protection Program (RPP) budget. See CAL FIRE Handbook [Section 3762.2.3](#) for additional detail.

However, expenditures incurred for the reasons listed below will **not** be funded by the RPP budget, but instead will be the responsibility of the respective Unit's budget.

- Underutilization of on-site medical services made available to CAL FIRE Units (i.e. failure to schedule the maximum number of employees for the increment of time calendared on the Traveling Team schedule).
- Less than five working days notice of cancellation of the Traveling Team, in accordance with the RPP contract agreement. For cancellations, Region RPP Coordinators are required to contact the Human Resources, OSHPros, RPP Analyst no less than five working days prior to the first date of Traveling Team assignment at the location or in accordance with the contract agreement.
- Failure by an employee to attend a scheduled medical evaluation.

The costs associated with underutilization, late cancellations, and failures to attend scheduled medical evaluations will be charged to the appropriate Unit's budget at the end of each medical evaluation billing cycle.

[\(see next section\)](#)

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[\(see Forms or Forms Samples\)](#)

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION



CANDIDATE CERTIFICATION OF MEDICAL CONDITION

☐ I certify that, to my knowledge, there has been no change in my medical condition since I completed my last CAL FIRE-600a, Respiratory Protection Plan Medical Questionnaire, and Standard 610, Health Questionnaire for the _____ classification for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, at the _____ Unit.

or;

☐ There has been a change in my medical condition that may adversely affect my ability to perform my duties. Please complete a CAL FIRE-600a, Respiratory Protection Plan Medical Questionnaire and related documents. I understand I cannot work until I am medically cleared.

(SIGNATURE)

(DATE)

(PRINT NAME)

(LAST 4 SSN)

Please complete and return to:
Departmental Medical Consultant
CAL FIRE
P O Box 980370
W. Sacramento, CA 95798

OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by _____ Date _____

Last clearance date _____ () Data entered